

Spire Pre School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY365871
Inspection date	15 July 2008
Inspector	Fran Fielder
Setting Address	United Reform Church, High Street, Uckfield, East Sussex, TN22 5AE
Telephone number	01825 762268
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Registered person	Spire Pre-School
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day care

ABOUT THIS INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality of childcare and, if applicable, of nursery education. The inspection was carried out under Part XA Children Act 1989 as introduced by the Care Standards Act 2000 and, where nursery education is provided, under Schedule 26 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

This report details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcomes for children set out in the Children Act 2004; the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding; and, where nursery education is provided, the *Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration or 1 April 2004 whichever is the later.

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

For more information about early years inspections, please see the booklet *Are you ready for your inspection?* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Spire Pre-school has been established for over 30 years. It is a registered charity managed by a board of trustees. It operates from a church hall in Uckfield, East Sussex.

The pre-school opens five days a week from 08.00 to 15.45 during school term times. A maximum of 26 children aged from two to under five years may attend the setting at any one time. There are currently 43 children on roll, and of these, 37 children receive funding for nursery education. The pre-school currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Children are drawn from the local urban and rural areas.

There are nine members of staff. Of these, six hold appropriate early years qualifications and two others are in training.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children play in a clean environment and staff use good procedures to minimise cross infection. Children learn the importance of good personal hygiene through a range of activities. They learn how to use a toothbrush and enjoy identifying items inside feely bags that relate to personal hygiene. The use of liquid soap and paper towels helps prevent the spread of infection. All staff have training in the use of epi-pens and all hold a current first aid certificate. This means they can easily assess the seriousness of any accident and allows them to act swiftly in the children's best interest.

Children enjoy healthy snacks. In the morning, they have cereal and toast for breakfast. They receive a biscuit and a choice of fresh fruit for morning snack. This ensures children develop healthy eating habits. Staff monitor the contents of children's lunch boxes so that all children enjoy a nutritious meal. Staff ensure they adhere to individual dietary needs and also take this into account when planning cooking activities so that all children can be included.

Children enjoy many physical activities that contribute to their good health. Indoors, they play on climbing frames, walk on balancing beams, enjoy indoor cricket and dance. Children walk to the local park for outdoor games and enjoy picnic snack times. Staff take an activity bag with a range of equipment that allows children to take part in physical play outside that contributes to their good health.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children play in a welcoming environment with a lovely atmosphere. There are colourful posters and staff take care when displaying children's work, showing how it is valued. The room is well organised with space for quiet and active play. Children enjoy table top and floor activities. Staff make sure children have easy access to a wide range of good quality resources that are stimulating and age appropriate.

The premises are secure and there are good systems in place to keep children safe from unknown visitors. Regular risk assessments ensure all areas are safe for children. The outings procedure ensure all children are very well supervised while having freedom to explore. Regular drills means staff and children know how to evacuate the building quickly and safely.

Several staff have completed advance training in child protection. They follow clear procedures if they have any concerns about a child in their care. This safeguards children.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are very happy and enjoy their time at nursery. Good relationships are evident throughout the nursery as staff focus their attention on children's enjoyment. Staff know the children extremely well and plan effectively for all ages. Staff are enthusiastic about the activities, encouraging children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children enjoy a good range of well-planned activities that help them make very good progress towards the early learning goals. Staff plan extremely well for all areas of learning and support individuals to achieve their full potential. Staff observe and assess children's progress making it easy to identify children's next steps for learning. However, the planning does not clearly show differentiation. Staff plan and prepare the environment to ensure activities are easy to access.

Children are very enthusiastic about their play. They enjoy making camps, building using large construction items and completing large floor puzzles. They listen well to stories and enjoy well-known tales such as 'Shh, don't tell Mr Wolf'. Children who become a little distracted are skilfully and sensitively encouraged to focus on the story. Children enjoy singing and know a wide range of songs such as 'Bob, the Builder' and 'The Wheels on the Bus'. They recognise letters and can easily identify words that begin with a specific letter.

Songs such as 'Five Little Speckled Frogs' and 'The Pirate Song' help children learn about number. They confidently count along with the beat of a drum. They learn about early calculation by counting the number of boys and girls and comparing and deciding whether there are more girls than boys. Children love cooking and confidently count the spoonfuls of flour needed. They discuss the smell and texture of the flour as they mix this to make biscuits.

Children make their own musical instruments and create their own music. They dress up in a range of costumes that reflect different cultures. They plant daffodil bulbs and go on nature walks. Children work collaboratively to create life size collages of people. They paint, draw and experiment with colour. They use a good range of materials to create individual pieces of art work.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Staff know the children well and ensure each child is treated as an individual. All children have access to the full range of activities. Children learn to respect and value differences. Well-planned topics and activities help children to understand and appreciate other cultures. There are good systems in place to support children who have learning difficulties. Good communication with parents and schools ensures children's needs are identified so that appropriate strategies can be implemented to support their ongoing needs.

Children behave extremely well and are very polite. They willingly help to clear away toys and enjoy responsibilities. Staff are consistent and give genuine praise. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. Parents receive information about all aspects of the provision. Questionnaires allow parents to comment on and contribute to the running of the pre-school. There are both formal and informal systems in place for staff and parents to share information about children's individual progress and development. Parents contribute to their child's assessment at parents' evenings and receive written reports. The regular sharing of information enhances children's progress towards the early learning goals. Parents' comments indicate how pleased they are with what the pre-school offers and are especially pleased at how well staff build the children's confidence.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children benefit from playing in a well-planned environment that allows them to gain fully from all activities. Good recruitment and induction procedures mean that suitable, experienced and qualified persons look after the children. Effective staff deployment ensures children receive good support at all times. Regular meetings and in service training days ensure staff are up to date with any changes within the setting. All required records are confidential and mostly well maintained. All policies and procedures required for the safe and effective running of the provision are in place, although a few lack detail and do not fully reflect practice.

Leadership and management are good. Clear aims for the nursery indicate commitment to improvement. Staff are enthusiastic and dedicated to their work. They are fully aware of their role and clearly enjoy supporting the children at all times. They work extremely well together and excellent support and guidance allows them to provide a stimulating, well-balanced programme. The pre-school works well with local schools. Teachers are invited to come to meet the children who are to join their classes. Continuous evaluation of the educational provision means the activities fully support children's development. The provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since registration, there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider or Ofsted to take any action in order to meet the National Standards.

The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made by parents, which they can see on request. The complaints record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.

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WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

The quality and standards of the care

To improve the quality and standards of care further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- revise and update policies and procedures to ensure they include all relevant information and reflect practice

The quality and standards of the nursery education

To improve the quality and standards of nursery education further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- ensure planning includes differentiation and that children's next steps for learning are clearly identified, so that all staff are aware of individual learning needs

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Complaints about Ofsted Early Years: concerns or complaints about Ofsted's role in regulating and inspecting childcare and early education (HMI ref no 2599)* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk